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[Rewrite claim 14 as follows:]

--14. (amended) The method according to claim 13 wherein said computer network is the Internet or an intranet of networked computers.--

R E M A R K S

The claims of the present application are amended herewith in a manner that is believed to place this application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

We note for sake of completeness, that in the preliminary amendment, filed November 11, 2000, the amendment to claim 1 should obviously have been made instead to claim 3. We further note from the outstanding Official Action that the preliminary amendment appears to have been entered in that manner.

At item 1 of the Official Action, claims 1-14 as previously in the case were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C §112, for indefiniteness. In particular, the Examiner requested that the claims be clarified as to whether a method or apparatus is being claimed.

By the present amendment, claims 1-14 are amended to clarify that a method is being claimed. Consequently, it is believed that the indefiniteness rejection of the

claims as originally filed has been overcome, and should not be repeated with respect to any of the claims as they now appear in the case.

At item 2 of the Official Action, the drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a). The Official Action noted that, if the claims are in fact drawn to a method, then a corresponding flowchart should be prepared.

That objection is respectfully traversed. In this art, methods of playing card games are considered to be adequately illustrated by a depiction of the playing surface, in conjunction with the description in the text. This is evidenced by the prior art of record, all of which are U.S. patents containing claims directed to methods of playing card games, but none of which were required to include a flow chart. Therefore, rule 83(a) is either considered to be satisfied by drawings such as that already present in the present application; or alternatively, is routinely waived in this art. Applicant believes that consistent treatment recommends that the same be done in the present application, and such is respectfully requested.

At item 4 of the Official Action, claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being clearly anticipated by WEBB 6,241,250. That rejection is respectfully traversed, for the following reasons.

WEBB is not prior art to the present application. The WEBB patent was issued on an application filed September 3, 1999, which claims priority of a continuation-in-part application filed July 12, 1999. The Official Action does not establish that WEBB is prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as of the July 12, 1999 filing date; however, in the present case, that does not matter, because the present application is the U.S. National Stage of a PCT International Application filed May 12, 1999, which in turn claims priority from an Australian application filed May 12, 1998. Therefore, the WEBB patent is not prior art in any event to the present application.

Lastly, at item 5 of the Official Action, claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by SCHORR et al. That rejection is also respectfully traversed.

Initially, we note that there are two SCHORR patents of record in the present application, namely, U.S. patents Nos. 5,257,810, and 5,275,416. The Official Action does not indicate which SCHORR patent is being relied upon in the rejection at item 5 of the Official Action. Therefore, for the sake of completeness, we point out below wherein claims 1-14 are patentably distinct from both of these patents.

SCHORR et al. 5,257,810

SCHORR et al. 5,257,810 discloses a method for playing a blackjack type game that has a dealer hand (30), and a single player hand (28). Its playing surface (12) has a plurality of playing locations (14) and each playing location (14) includes a dealer betting station (22) for placing a bet on the dealer hand (30) a player betting station (24) for placing a bet on the player hand (28), and a tie betting station (26) for placing a bet on a tie between the dealer hand (30) and the player hand (28).

SCHORR et al. 5,275,416

SCHORR et al. 5,275,416 is a continuation-in-part of the above-mentioned SCHORR et al. 5,257,810. In 5,275,416 the single player hand (28) taught in 5,257,810 is replaced by a plurality of player hand placement areas (28) for customers who elect to wager on their own playing hand. Customers may also elect to wager on the dealer hand or on a tie occurring.

Neither of the cited SCHORR et al. patents teach the feature of "one or more further betting zones associated with respective player and dealer betting zones, the or each said further betting zones being designated for a prenominated or paramount winning hand for participants to place bets thereon", as required by in the claims. Note that the further betting zones as claimed are not tie zones, which are specifically claimed in claims 2 and 6.

The further betting zones provide more betting choices, and allow casino operators to be innovative in selecting betting choices that may attract particular groups of players.

The game of the present application has a single dealer hand and a single player hand, on any of which a larger number of participants can place bets. Accordingly, relatively more participants can take part, and, at the same time, the turnaround time between games is relatively short. Therefore a much higher number of games per hour can be played. The number of betting choices provided by the games of this application also helps to keep the participants interested.

When playing the game of this application participants need not know complex game rules normally associated with casino games as all they need to do is place bets on selected betting choices. Because of this, the game can help to attract more new players to casinos.

Thus, in the light of the above discussion, it is believed to be apparent that neither of the SCHORR patents of record is anticipatory of any of present claims 1-14.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, therefore, it is believed that this application has been placed in condition for allowance,

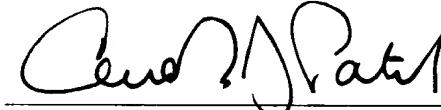
MANOV S.N. 09/700,116

with claims 1-14, as amended. Allowance and passage to issue on that basis are accordingly respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims. The attached pages are captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

--1. (amended) A method of playing a card game for a dealer and [at least] one imaginary or real player receiving cards from the dealer on a playing surface, the [game comprising a] playing surface having at least two sides, one or more designated player betting zones along one side of the surface, where participants can bet on the player winning, one or more designated dealer betting zones along an opposite side of the surface where the participants can bet on the dealer winning, and one or more further betting zones associated with respective player and dealer betting zones, the or each said further betting zones being designated for a prenominated or paramount winning hand for participants to place bets thereon, and in use one or each participant places a bet on one or more of the betting zones and a dealer deals from one or more packs of [cards] for the player and the dealer in a manner according to card game rules, on completion of a hand participants are paid according to winning bets made and according to the game rules.--

Claim 2 has been amended as follows:

--2. (amended) The [card game] method according to claim 1 wherein the surface has one or more tie zones for participants to place bets thereon so that a winning bet takes place when the dealer hand and the player hand are tied.--

Claim 3 has been amended as follows:

--3. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 1 wherein said further betting zones including one or more prenominated or paramount winning zones for the dealer and one or more prenominated or paramount winning zones for the player.--

Claim 4 has been amended as follows:

--4. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 1 wherein the prenominated winning hand is "Blackjack" in the game of that name.--

Claim 5 has been amended as follows:

--5. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 1 wherein the playing surface is divided into sectors and each sector has one player betting zone, one dealer betting zone and a prenominated or paramount

winning hand betting zone associated with each said player betting zone and dealer betting zone.--

Claim 6 has been amended as follows:

--6. (amended) The [card game] method according to claim 5 wherein each said sector has one or more tie zones.--

Claim 7 has been amended as follows:

--7. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 5 wherein a predetermined odd is allocated to each said tie zone and/or each said prenominated or paramount winning hand betting zones.--

Claim 8 has been amended as follows:

--8. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 1 wherein the surface has a player card position and a dealer card position, and the cards for the player hand and the dealer hand are respectively placed in the player card position and the dealer card position.--

Claim 9 has been amended as follows:

--9. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 1 wherein the cards including one or more sets of numbered cards, one or more sets of picture

cards and at least one set of "Ace" cards, and each numbered card having a value from 2 to 10, each picture card being designated the value of 10, and each "Ace" card being selectively counted as the value of 1 or 11.--

Claim 10 has been amended as follows:

--10. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 1 wherein for the game rules a bet on one of the player betting zones or on one of the dealer betting zones is a winning bet when the player hand or the dealer hand has a cumulative card values closest to 21 or has a Blackjack; and a bet on one of said further betting zones associated with the player betting zones or the dealer zones is a winning bet when the player hand or the dealer hand has said prenominated or paramount winning hand.--

Claim 11 has been amended as follows:

--11. (amended) The [card game] method according to claim 10 wherein a card is given to each said player hand and the dealer hand and the player hand must draw a card when its card value or cumulative card value is under 17; when the player hand having a Blackjack hand the player hand is either immediately declared a winning hand, or is declared a winning hand only if the dealer hand does not

have a Blackjack hand; when the player hand having a cumulative card value exceeding 21 the dealer hand is either immediately declared a winning hand, or is required to draw a card at a time until having a cumulative card value of at least 17 and not exceeding 21.--

Claim 12 has been amended as follows:

--12. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 10 wherein where both the player hand and the dealer hand have respectively cumulative card values exceeding 21 the hand having a value closest to 21 is declared the winning hand or alternatively a tie is declared.--

Claim 13 has been amended as follows:

--13. (twice amended) The [card game] method according to claim 1 wherein the game is played at a game table or on an electronic medium including an interactive video and/or audio medium such as a television network, a computer network and any other suitable communications network.--

Claim 14 has been amended as follows:

--14. (amended) The [card game] method according to claim 13 wherein said computer network is the Internet or an intranet of networked computers.--